

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-10 SAJ-01 OMB-01 AID-05 IGA-02
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PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /086 W
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R 131409Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4501
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 RIO DE JANEIRO 0205

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: AINF,PFOR, BR, US

SUBJ:FORMER AMBASSADOR GORDON CORRECTS RECORD RE PUBLICATION OF

OFFICIAL USG DOCUMENTS

REF: RIO DE JANEIRO 5101 AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY : THE JORNAL DO BRASIL HAS PUBLISHED A LENGTHY LETTER
FROM FORMER US AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL LINCOLN GORDON IN WHICH THE
AMBASSADOR CORRECTS SEVERAL ERRORS OF FACT AND INTERPRETATION
CONTAINED IN THE 3 PART SERIES OF ARTICLES, BASED ON QUG
DOCUMENTS RELATING VYOLART'S OVERTHROW, WHICH THE JORNAL
PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER LAST. THE EFFECT OF THE CORRECTION IS
TO OFFSET IMPRESSIONS THAT THE US MAY HAVE INTERVENED OR MANI-
PULATED INDIVIDUALS OR EVENTS IN THE COUP. AMBASSADOR GORDON

ALSO INDICATED HIS DISAGREEMENT WITH FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT PROCEDURE.

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2. IN WHAT IS HOPED WILL BE A
POSTSCRIPT TO ITS DECEMBER 18-20
PUBLICATION OF FORMERLY CLASSIFIED USG DOCUMENTS RELATING
TO 1964 OVERTHROW OF GOULART REGIME IN BRAZIL, JORNAL DO BRASIL
PUBLISHED JANUARY 10 LENGTHY LETTER FROM FORMER AMBASSADOR
LINCOLN GORDON ADDRESSED TO THE NEWSPAPER IN WHICH HE
POINTED OUT 7 ERRORS OF SUBSTANCE OR TRANSLATION AND 9

OF DIFFERENCES OF INTERPRETATION IN THE JORNAL'S DECEMBER SERIES. IN A SWIPE AT RIVAL RIO NEWSPAPER O GLOBO, JORNAL ALSO DEVOTED AN ENTIRE PAGE TO AN INTERVIEW GRANTED THAT PAPER BY AMBASSADOR GORDON, PUBLISHING THE TEXTS OF A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW, THE TEXT OF A TELEGRAM SENT BY GLOBO'S NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT OF AN INTERVIEW WITH GORDON WHICH HAD BEEN CLEARED BY HIM, AND FINALLY THE TEXT OF THE INTERVIEW AS PUBLISHED BY GLOBO. THE APPARENT PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE WAS TO REFUTE O GLOBO'S CHARGE THAT JORNAL'S REPORTING CONTAINED "ABSURD ERRORS".

3. IN HIS LETTER TO JORNAL, APPARENTLY RECEIVED JANUARY 9, AMBASSADOR GORDON STATED, "YOUR CORRESPONDENT MARCOS SA CORREA MADE AN ADMIRABLE JOURNALISTIC WORK OF SELECTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS. HOWEVER, PARTIALLY IN VIRTUE OF THE COMPLEXITY OF THESE DOCUMENTS AND OF THE PARTIAL VISION OF THE HAPPENING OF THAT PERIOD WHICH THEY PROVIDE, HIS ARTICLES CONTAIN A NUMBER OF ERRORS OF SUBSTANCE OR OF TRANSLATION AND SEVERAL CASES OF QUESTIONABLE INTERPRETATION. I AM WRITING TO LIST THESE ERRORS OF SUBSTANCE AND THE DIFFERENCES OF INTERPRETATION IN THE HOPE THAT YOU WILL PUBLISH THESE COMMENTS."

4. THE SEVEN ERRORS WHICH THE AMBASSADOR CORRECTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

A. TRANSLATION OF WORD "POL" AS POLITICAL RATHER THAN PETROLEUM (SEE PARAGRAPH 16 BRASILIA'S 10365;

B. CORRECTION OF ZULU TIME;

C. IN PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S MESSAGE TO INTERIM PRESIDENT
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MAZZILLI NO MENTION WAS MADE OF RECOGNITION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND SINCE THE EMBASSY AT THAT TIME HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF A GROUP ENTITLED REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND, AND THE EMBASSY CONSIDERED MAZZILLI, NOMINATED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME TRIBUNAL, AS A SYMBOL OF CIVIL, CONSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMACY;

D. AMBASSADOR GORDON EXPLAINED THAT HE OFFERED PETROLEUM FROM FOUR US TANKER TO PETROBRAS ON APRIL 4, AN OFFER WHICH WAS DECLINED, AND THE TANKERS WERE SUBSEQUENTLY ORDERED NORTHWARD.

E. AMBASSADOR GORDON CORRECTS SEVERAL ERRORS IN HIS BIOGRAPHY;

F. AMBASSADOR GORDON CORRECTS A MIX-UP IN BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON MESSRS. MCGEORGE AND WILLIAM BUNDY;

G. EXPLANATION OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MESSAGES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FROM THE AMBASSADOR, PERSONALLY, AND THOSE FROM THE EMBASSY.

5. THE NINE DIFFERENCES OF INTERPRETATION WERE AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE AMBASSADOR DISAGREED WITH THE JORNAL'S ALLEGATION THAT HE WAS BETTER INFORMED ABOUT COUP PLANS THAN HE SUBSEQUENTLY ALLOWED IN HIS STATEMENTS BEFORE THE US SENATE AND IN A

VEJA INTERVIEW OF 1971. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE EMBASSY WAS WELL INFORMED THAT SOME TYPE OF MOVEMENT AGAINST GOULART WAS BEING ORGANIZED BUT THE EMBASSY WAS NOT A PARTICIPANT IN THE CONSPIRACY AND HAD NO DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE COUP PLANS.

B. WITH RESPECT TO AN ALLEGED INCONSISTENCY OVER WHETHER OR NOT GOULART HAD LEFT BRAZIL WHEN PRESIDENT JOHNSON SENT THE MESSAGE TO MAZZILLI, THE AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO HIS VEJA INTERVIEW WHERE HE STATED THAT HE THOUGHT THAT GOULART WAS IN URUGUAY OR ENROUTE THERE ON APRIL 2.

C. WITH REGARD TO THE ALLEGATION THAT THE CIA IN BELO HORIZONTE HAD OBTAINED ON MARCH 30 "ALL THE PLANS OF THE REVOLUTION FOR THE FOLLOWING DAY," AMBASSADOR GORDON REITERATED THE POINT MADE IN A. ABOVE.

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D. WITH REGARD TO AN ALLEGED REQUEST TO HIM TO "FURNISH A COMPLETE PROGRAM OF MATERIAL HELP TO GUARANTEE THE SUCCESS OF THE COUP," THE AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO ONE OF THE TELECONFERENCES REPORTED IN WHICH HE STATED THAT ASIDE FROM SOME PAULISTAS, WHOM HE DID NOT TAKE SERIOUSLY, THERE HAD BEEN NO PRESSURE FOR THE US TO OFFER OPEN SUPPORT.

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PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /086 W
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FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4502
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

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E. THE AMBASSADOR STATED THAT THE REPORTING SUGGESTED THAT THE BROTHER SAM TASK FORCE WAS PREPARED TO ACT AS IF THE CASE OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. WHEREAS, IN FACT, THE TASK FORCE WAS NOT A RESULT OF ANY DECISION TO INTERVENE, BUT RATHER A CONTINGENCY IN THE EVENT A CIVIL WAR ENSUED.

F. THE AMBASSADOR COMMENTED THAT THE REMOVAL OF THE PHRASE FROM THE JOHNSON-MAZZELLI LETTER "IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONSTITUTIONAL DETERMINATIONS" DID NOT HAVE ANY PROFOUND SIGNIFICANCE AS SUSGESTED BY THE NEWSPAPER.

F. AMBASSADOR STATED

THAT DEPUTY SECRETARY BALL THOUGHT THAT THE FINAL PHRASE IN THE LETTER CONVEYED THE SAME MEANING:

"DETERMINATION OF THE BRAZILIAN COMMUNITY TO RESOLVE ITS DIFFICULTIES WITHIN THE LIMITS OF CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY AND WITHOUT CIVIL CONFLICT."

G. WITH REGARD TO CIA'S ALLEGED INTEREST IN BRAZILIAN PRESS ACCUSATIONS THAT AMBASSADOR MANN WAS A HARDLINER ONLY BECAUSE CIA WANTED A CHANGE OF REGTME IN BRAZIL, AMBASSADOR GORDON POINTED OUT THAT THESE ACCUSATIONS WERE BASED ON BLOCK INFORMATION WHICH, PER SE, ALWAYS INTERESTS THE CIA AND PARTICULARLY IF SUCH MISINFORMATION APPEARS TO BE OF SOVIET ORIGIN.
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H. WITH RESPECT TO THE AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE CONCERNING MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO BRAZIL, THE AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT HIS COMMENTS ON THE HISTORICAL ROLE OF THE BRAZILIAN MILITARY IS CONTRASTED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF THE MILITARY IN OTHER LATIN COUNTRIES, NOT OUT OF ANY ANTICIPATION OF A FUTURE CRISIS, BUT RATHER FOR THE USE OF AMBASSADOR MANN IN TESTIFYING ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

I. WITH REGARD TO THE CIA REPORT OF THEN-GOVERNOR MAGALHAES PINTO'S ALLEGED PLOTTING WITH ADMIRAL HECK AGAINST CASTELLO BRANCO, AMBASSADOR GORDON POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE DOZENS OF TELEGRAMS REPORTING VARIOUS RUMORS. HE DOES NOT RECALL SEEING THIS REPORT, BUT BELIEVED THAT IT WAS ONE OF MANY RUMORS NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY THE MISSION.

6. AMBASSADOR GORDON CLOSED HIS LETTER BY STATING "I CONSIDER IT A POLITICAL ERROR ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES TO PERMIT THE PUBLICATION OF THIS TYPE OF MATERIAL AT WHATEVER TIME ESPECIALLY WHEN THE PERSONALITIES INVOLVED ARE STILL ALIVE. IN THE CASE OF DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE GATHERED BY THE FBI, THERE EXISTS RIGID RULES ABOUT THE NON-PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION AND STATEMENTS BECAUSE THEY

INVADE INDIVIDUAL PRIVACY AND CAN GREATLY PREJUDICE INNOCENT PERSONS WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION. IN MY OPINION, THE SAME PRINCIPLE SHOULD APPLY REGARDING THE RELEASE OF DOCUMENTS CONTAINING RAW, UNANALYZED INFORMATION RELATED TO INFORMATION GATHERED IN THIRD COUNTRIES."

7. THE FULL PAGE DEVOTED TO REPORTING THREE STAGES OF O GLOBO'S INTERVIEW WITH THE AMBASSADOR, WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED BY AN UNDERSTANDABLE INTEREST ON JORNAL DO BRASIL'S PART NOT TO LET ITS COMPETITION EITHER HORN IN ON ITS JORNALISTIC COUP OR TO DENIGRATE THE QUALITY OF THE JORNAL'S REPORTING. IN THE GLOBO INTERVIEW AS PUBLISHED, AMBASSADOR UNCLASSIFIED

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GORDON IS QUOTED AS STATING "THE ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THE JORNAL DO BRASIL ON 18-20 DECEMBER CONTAIN SOME ABSURD ERRORS, EVEN OF TRANSLATION." THE JORNAL SUBSEQUENTLY TELEPHONED GORDON ABOUT HIS ALLEGED QUOTE WHICH THE JORNAL STATES HE SAID WAS "INEXACT AND INVENTED." ACCORDING TO THE JORNAL, THE AMBASSADOR FURNISHED THE NEWSPAPER COPIES OF THE TRANSCRIPT OF HIS TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH O GLOBO AND A WRITTEN ANNOTED COPY OF THE SAME INTERVIEW.

THE NET RESULT OF PUBLICATION OF THREE DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE SAME INTERVIEW IS A DEMONSTRATION THAT O GLOBO IS ITSELF/PRETTY SLOPPY IN ITS REPORTING: TIT FOR TAT. (THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE GLOBO INTERVIEW IS ESSENTIALLY THOSE CORRECTIONS OF THE RECORD ALREADY CITED IN AMBASSADOR GORDON'S LETTER TO JORNAL DO BRASIL.) WHAT WE SUSPECT IS NOT THE FINAL WORD IN THIS SQUABBLE BETWEEN RIO'S TWO PRINCIPAL NEWSPAPERS WAS O GLOBO'S FRONT PAGE TREATMENT JANUARY 11 OF A GORDON TELEPHONE CALL. GORDON LAMENTED BEING INVOLVED IN A DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TWO NEWSPAPERS AND ADMITTED TO USING "ABSURD ERRORS" IN HIS TALK WITH O GLOBO, BUT ON BACKGROUND ONLY.

8. EMBASSY CONCURS IN THIS MESSAGE.
DEXTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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